

FIRE PREVENTION STANDARDS

Subject: False Alarm Mitigation

Number: 488.203

Date: Revised 11/19/01

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OBJECTIVE

To reduce the number of false alarms, thereby, reducing the Life Safety risk to the community and the District.

To determine precise responsibility for those alarms, the identification and correction of system deficiencies, and the necessary documentation of information for a full cost recovery of the expenses associated with false alarms.

PROCEDURE

The following procedure will be adopted:

I. RESPONSE

When an alarm is initiated by a fire detection or suppression system, the responding Chief officer, or in his/her absence, the first-due company officer may reduce the number(s) of responding apparatus, if there is no other indication of a fire and the premises has a history of false alarms. However, one suppression unit will normally continue to the scene (code 2) to take a report even though a (code 4) may have been given, unless the B/C overrides this normal requirement due to extraordinary circumstances.

II. INFORMATION

The Incident Commander has the responsibility to insure that as much information as possible is collected which pertains to the false alarm incident. False alarm field worksheets, (form #291.203) shall be carried on the apparatus and used to insure proper information collections. The reporting officer shall transfer the False Alarm Field work sheet, to electric format located in ----- . This collected data will then be forwarded to the False Alarm Project Coordinator at the Fire Prevention Bureau via E-mail, before going off duty.

III. FOLLOW-UP (FIRE PREVENTION BUREAU)

A. It is not the intent of the District to bill for every False Alarm response. However, it is our intent to determine the cause of the false alarm and require the owner to take the necessary actions, to eliminate the cause of the false alarm.

False Alarm causes fall into two (2) categories: accidental or preventable.

1. Accidental

- a. Those alarms that could not have been anticipated and/or prevented. These causes may include, but are not limited to, lighting, earthquakes, electrical voltage surges in a system, water system surges or system failure NOT caused by inadequate maintenance or system design.
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- b. If a false alarm(s) is accidental, then every attempt should be made by district personnel to provide expertise, in rectifying the matter, as quickly as possible. If it becomes apparent that the system owner or representative is unwilling to take the necessary action to eliminate the false alarms, or if after 1 additional false alarm in any 90 day period occurs, the District will bill for all similar false alarms, involving the faulty system, until the necessary corrective action is taken and documented by the owner.

NOTE: Documentation that corrective action has been taken may include, but not be limited to, a repair correction letter, work order from a licensed fire alarm or fire sprinkler contractor, or a signed maintenance agreement.

2. Preventable

- a. Those alarms, which could have been anticipated or prevented, are defined as negligent or preventable. Those causes may include, but are not be limited to, lack of maintenance/repair. Failure to correct a system problem, once the problem is identified and corrective action was required.
- b. Alarm or Fire Sprinkler System contractor(s) working on the system without first assuring that the approved central station contractor is notified, per approved notification process.
- c. An alarm monitoring contractor who, after being notified that the fire alarm and/or fire sprinkler system was undergoing repair or modification or testing, transmits a fire alarm signal to the Dispatch Center.

If a false alarm occurs because of a preventable occurrence, or through a negligent act, the district will bill the owner, under the following criteria.

Unacceptable levels of false alarms are defined as false alarms within any ninety (90) day period and as further defined in paragraphs a, b, c, & d:

- a. Owner/Property Manager, (Alarm Subscriber): For each false alarm in excess of one (1) at a protected premise. (Owners, property managers or their agents bear the ultimate responsibility for any and all costs/liabilities incurred as a result of a false alarm.)
 - b. Alarm Service Contractor: For each false alarm at a protected premises, when working on a system performing maintenance, service, testing, installation, removal, modifications, or remodel.
 - c. Alarm Service Monitoring Company: More than one (1) alarm from any of the company's combined monitored properties located in the district.
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- d. Automatic Fire Sprinkler Contractors: For each False Alarm at a protected premises, when performing maintenance service, testing, installation, removal or remodel.

The billing process is considered an enforcement tool and should be used when other methods have failed to correct the problem. As with any similar program, specific issues periodically come up. When those questions arise please feel free to consult with your supervisor for their advise on a possible resolution.

3. False alarm responses are to be billed at the hourly rate for personnel that responded to the incident. All response charges shall be based on a minimum of one (1) hour. Billing shall also include an Administrative charge of 1 1/2 hour based on current District's fee schedule.

Mike Dobson, Fire Marshal

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DETECTION SYSTEM/FALSE ALARM WORKSHEET

INCIDENT #: _____

INCIDENT ADDRESS: _____

1. PROPERTY OWNER / AGENT NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY: _____

ZIP: _____

PHONE #: _____

2. ALARM COMPANY: _____

PHONE #:

CENTRAL STATION COMPANY: _____

PHONE #:

3. WAS ANY MAINTENANCE, TESTING, OR CONSTRUCTION IN PROGRESS?

YES ☐NO ☐

4. PERSON WORKING ON SITE: _____

FIRM NAME: _____

PHONE #:

ADDRESS: _____

CITY: _____

ZIP: _____

5. PERSON CONTACTED BEFORE WORKING ON SITE: _____

FIRM OF PERSON CONTACTED: _____

6. TIME CALL WAS MADE: _____ HOURS: _____

7. WAS SYSTEM FUNCTIONING AS DESIGNED? YES ☐NO ☐

8. DOES COMPONENT OF SYSTEM APPEAR BROKEN OR NEED REPAIR?

YES ☐NO ☐

9. DID SYSTEM RE-SET BY ITSELF?

YES ☐NO ☐DID SYSTEM RE-SET WITH HELP OF CODE? YES ☐NO ☐10. WAS ALARM RESULT OF HONEST MISTAKE? YES ☐NO ☐

11. IS THIS ALARM ONE OF MANY AT THIS SITE?

YES ☐NO ☐

12. HAS OWNER / AGENT BEEN ADVISED TO REPAIR SYSTEM BEFORE?

YES ☐NO ☐

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS:

REPORTING OFFICER: _____

EMPLOYEE NUMBER: _____

COMPANY / SHIFT: /

DATE: _____

RTE: E-MAIL FPB AREA SUPERVISOR

FILE: F. A. CLERICAL STAFF

INIT: _____

DATE: _____

COPY:

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False Alarm Recovery Invoice

FPB Use Only

Invoice No.: #in Parenthesis

Invoice Date: XX/XX/XX

Responsible Party Address

[Accounts Payable]

[Name of Company]

[Address]

[City, State, Zip]

Alarm Location Address

[Business Name]

[Alarm Location Address]

[City, State, Zip]

Incident No.: 24-xxxxxx	Number of Personnel	0
Alarm No.: #in Parenthesis	Time Spent	1
Alarm Date: XX/XX/XX	Personnel Cost	\$0.00
Time of Call: XXXXX	Administrative Time	1
	Administrative Cost	<u>\$107.67</u>
	Total Amount Due	\$107.67

Facts have been reviewed relative to the above described incident. A copy of our incident report is included for your records. Refer to the method of calculation in the last paragraph.

Remit a check in the amount of **\$107.67** within two weeks of receipt of this notice. Make your check payable to SMFD, 3012 Gold Canal Drive, Rancho Cordova, CA 95670
Attn: False Alarm Program.

Failure to comply may lead to a citation, mandatory court appearance or other remedy as may be allowed by law. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Supervising Inspector Tracey Timpone at 942-3300

Pursuant to Sacramento County Code 1135 and the Uniform Fire Code amendments contained therein, the Sacramento Metropolitan Fire District makes demands for our costs associated with the False Alarm Incident described above. SMFD Resolution 30-00 further allows for recovery of administrative costs such as user fees or for services or supplies. Section D #8 allows for false alarm recovery fees to be collected in the amount of \$71.78, and Section D #4 a minimum of \$35.89 for all responding apparatus at the rate of \$35.89 each.
